

Healthy WorksSM School and Community Gardens Program Community Contractor Application to Lead a Pilot Project to Plan a Joint Use Garden

Purpose

In schools and neighborhoods across the country, gardens have become a powerful tool for promoting learning, healthy living, environmental stewardship, and social connections. Research shows that students who participate in school garden programs score higher on academic tests and they consume more fruits and vegetables. School gardens that have active support of the community flourish and provide a dynamic classroom for students, teachers, and staff. Cities with community gardens report a boost in property values, neighborhood pride, and social connectivity. Residents in these cities also have greater access to healthy, affordable foods and an opportunity to participate in city greening.

Yet even though school and community gardens offer far-reaching benefits, keeping them thriving can be challenging. Schools often rely on the support of a few garden “champions,” usually parents, to oversee the garden, but when these key volunteers move on, a once thriving garden can go fallow. Neighborhood residents seeking to establish community gardens often face complicated zoning codes and high land costs, insurmountable barriers in even the most supportive communities. Establishing community gardens on school property -- so-called joint use gardens, where the school uses some plots and community residents use others -- provides a practical solution to developing and sustaining school and community garden projects.

Healthy WorksSM *School and Community Gardens Program (Gardens Program)* is seeking proposals from nonprofit or government agencies to lead a Pilot Project to Plan a Joint Use Garden. Proposals must identify a public school to partner with and a site for a proposed garden to be used as both an instructional school garden (i.e., a garden for teaching students) and a community garden (i.e., a garden residents can use for growing food for themselves). The proposed garden site may have an existing garden that could be enhanced to serve the dual purpose. **The proposed garden site must be on public school property OR at a location that is no more than five blocks from a public school (approximately a half mile) and accessible to the school and residents of the nearby community.** The *Gardens Program* will select two proposals to fund. Please see Scope of Work below for a complete list of project activities. The Pilot Project to Plan a Joint Use Garden must take place from July 18, 2011 to February 29, 2012; extensions to the project timeline and funding will not be allowed.

Background

Healthy WorksSM is a countywide initiative making systems and environmental changes by promoting wellness initiatives that address the nationwide obesity epidemic. The Healthy WorksSM *School and Community Gardens Program* recognizes the role gardens and garden programs can play in promoting healthy eating and physical activity among individuals of all ages. Its purpose is to reduce barriers to gardening through the development of:

- Partnerships between schools and community organizations to support gardens as places of learning, healthy living, and community development
- Regional Garden Education Centers, five community-based hubs for education and training in basic, school, and community gardening
- City policies that encourage establishing and preserving community gardens

Healthy WorksSM is administered by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, through a federal grant funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Implementation of the Healthy WorksSM *School and Community Gardens Program* is led by the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, a program facilitated by Community Health Improvement Partners, and supported through partnerships with the University of California San Diego and Victory Gardens San Diego, a program of San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project. For more information visit:

www.HealthyWorks.org

Project Funds and Resources

The Healthy WorksSM Gardens Program will provide:

- Up to \$15,000 for the implementation of the project scope of work.
- Technical assistance in community engagement, joint use agreements, and project planning.
- Garden training and leadership development.
- Instructional garden resources for schools (i.e., curricula options and training, San Diego County Office of Education "Green Machine" site visits).
- Design assistance for a new or enhanced garden space at the proposed site.
- Garden start-up funds (up to \$1,500)*

**These funds are intended to be start-up funds for developing the garden. They are not intended to cover the entire material cost of developing a joint use garden. The Gardens Program will provide technical assistance in developing a budget for the garden build and will recommend funding sources to further develop the garden project.*

Eligibility Requirements

The Healthy WorksSM Gardens Program is seeking proposals from nonprofit or government agencies to lead a Pilot Project to Plan a Joint Use Garden. The agency must demonstrate project leadership capacity and community and school interest in the project. **It must also identify a public school partner (K - 12) and a site on school property or within five blocks (a half mile) of the school for the development or enhancement of a garden that can serve both as a school instructional garden and a community garden.** The site must be accessible to the school partner and the community, and have adequate access to water and sunlight (6-8 hours daily).

Scope of Work

1. Agency will develop and implement the project under the guidance of and with technical assistance from the Healthy WorksSM School and Community Gardens Program throughout the grant period.
2. Agency will establish and facilitate a garden team composed of the applicant agency, community residents/gardeners, representatives from the school partner (e.g., teachers, parents, staff), and representatives of the school district (e.g., facilities management, landscape department, superintendent's office representative, etc.) to conduct planning activities for the establishment or enhancement of a garden that will serve as both a school/afterschool instructional garden and a community garden.
3. Agency will recruit a minimum of three garden team members to participate in Regional Garden Education Center (RGEC) courses (for more information, see www.healthyworks.org).
4. Agency will lead the garden team in developing project goals, implementation plan, and timeline.
5. Agency will work with the school partner and district to determine roles and responsibilities for operating and maintaining the garden.
6. Agency will lead the garden team in developing protocols for communication and conflict resolution.
7. Agency will work with the school partner and district to ensure their support for the project goals and project implementation plan and address concerns about sharing garden space (e.g., liability, safety).
8. Agency will collaborate with the school to develop a procedure for all community gardeners and garden volunteers to meet district requirements for volunteers (such as background checks and TB testing) if the garden site is on school property.
9. Agency will work toward entering into a formal agreement (such as a joint use agreement) with the landowner of the proposed garden site that spells out roles and responsibilities for the garden.
10. Agency will recruit a minimum of three teachers or school staff to receive curricula and/or training to support the use of the garden for educational purposes.
11. Agency will collaborate with Victory Gardens San Diego to design the garden.
12. Agency will lead the garden team in developing a plan to build the garden, including a budget and possible funding sources.
13. Agency will prepare a written plan that addresses how the garden will be sustained for at least three years.
14. Agency will complete a monthly report of activities (a reporting template will be provided by Community Health Improvement Partners).

Suggested Implementation Timeline

Task	Timeline
Establish and facilitate a broad-based garden team.	Months 1 - 2
Recruit team members, teachers, residents to attend RGEK trainings.	Months 1 - 2
Lead the garden team in developing goals, plans, and timeline; determining roles and responsibilities; and deciding on communication and conflict resolution protocols.	Months 2 - 5
Work with leadership from school and district to ensure they support project goals and implementation plan; address concerns.	Months 2 - 5
Work toward developing a formal agreement for the garden (a joint use agreement if the garden will be on school property).	Months 3 - 7
Collaborate with Victory Gardens San Diego to design the garden.	Months 3 - 6
Develop a plan and budget to build the garden.	Months 3 - 6
Recruit teachers and school staff to receive outside training and support for using the garden for educational purposes.	Months 3 - 6
Collaborate with garden team to develop a plan for raising funds to build the garden.	Months 3 - 6
Develop a plan for sustaining the garden once it has been built. The plan should include the identification of policy changes needed to fully implement the project, strategies for increased utilization, and funding opportunities.	Months 5 - 7

Proposal Submission Requirements

Applicants should submit a project proposal that contains the following components; please present it in the following order and do not exceed the specified page limit:

Proposal component and order to submit it in	Page limit
Cover letter signed by the executive director of the applicant agency	1
Project narrative, to include the following:	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name, mission, and brief history of the agency that will be taking the leadership role in the partnership • The name, location, and interest of a designated school partner • Description of the agency's experience leading and implementing community organizing projects and any prior collaboration with the designated school partner • Location and description of the proposed garden site, including dimensions, hours of direct sunlight, location of water bib, community and school access (e.g., walkability, parking, locked gates) • Photo of the proposed garden site, embedded in the project proposal • The need for a community/school garden at this location • Interest by community residents in the project • Proposed plan for achieving project requirements, including roles and responsibilities of agency and school partner in fulfilling the Scope of Work 	
Budget and budget justification (see attached template)	2
Timeline for implementing the project (see attached template)	2
Letter of support signed by the principal of the designated school and the superintendent of the school district; the letter should address the following:	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that the applicant agency is the project lead and responsible for project oversight • Support for a shared school/community garden • Support for the identified garden site • Commitment to participate in project planning and garden design 	

Submit proposals as attachments in an email to JuliAnna Arnett, Healthy WorksSM Food Policy Manager, San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, a program facilitated by Community Health Improvement Partners, at jarnett@sdchip.org. Add the subject line: "Joint use garden pilot project application." Please direct questions to JuliAnna Arnett at 858.609.7962, jarnett@sdchip.org.

Application Deadline

Applications must be received by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, July 6th.

Question & Answer Session

Applicants interested in submitting a proposal can participate in a question and answer call with the Healthy WorksSM Gardens Program on Thursday, June 23rd from 10 – 11 a.m. Applicants should call (641) 715-3200 and enter access code 745014# at the time of the call.

Period of Contract

The contract period begins on July 25, 2011, and ends on February 29, 2012.

RFP Closed



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